

**Kentucky Board of Education Report
to the
November 7, 2005 Council on Postsecondary Education Meeting
Submitted by
Commissioner Gene Wilhoit**

October 5-6, 2005 Kentucky Board of Education Highlights:

- **Legislative Agenda and Budget Priorities Approved** -- At its October meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education approved the following five non-budget related proposals as items to be considered by the 2006 General Assembly:
- Clarification of the language on principal selection to clearly indicate that the superintendent recommends candidates for the position and the council selects from among those recommended;
 - Repeal of the sunset provision of KRS 157.621 to ensure any eligible district is able to levy the growth nickel, if needed for facilities due to unusual growth in student population;
 - Suspension of the prevailing wage requirement for school construction for two to five years in order to study its impact;
 - Requiring low-performing schools to review the readiness of all students entering the school in reading and mathematics, conduct additional diagnostic assessments for students and meet with parents to develop intervention plans addressing identified problems; and,
 - Clarification that employment of teachers at the Kentucky School for the Blind and Kentucky School for the Deaf is comparable to local school districts, not KRS Chapter 18A.

The Board also approved specific budget priorities that will be pursued during the 2006 General Assembly as follows:

- Additional funding for the SEEK formula (teachers' salaries and cost of living increases, additional days for the school calendar for instruction and professional development, incentive compensation program increase, funding of transportation back to its prior level and inclusion of a weight for LEP students).
 - Full funding of preschool.
 - Funding of technology back up to a level where districts can meet requirements.
- **Significant Discussion Occurs on Refocusing Secondary Education** -- Three elements – minimum high school graduation requirements, the Commonwealth Diploma and aligning funding policy to facilitate secondary school reform – were

discussed in detail and will require changes to administrative regulations that will come back for consideration of final approval at the December 7-8, 2005, meeting.

- The proposed **minimum graduation requirements** presented to the Board were:
 - Language Arts – Four (4) credits to include the content strands of reading, writing, speaking, listening, observing, inquiry, and using technology as a communication tool. Language arts shall be taken each year of high school.
 - Social Studies – Three (3) credits to include the content strands of historical perspective, geography, economics, government and civics, and culture and society.
 - Mathematics – Three (3) credits to include the content strands of number and computation, geometry and measurement, probability and statistics, and algebraic ideas and including the following minimum requirements:
 - One mathematics course taken each year of high school to ensure readiness for postsecondary education or the workforce based on the student's Individual Graduation Plan;
 - Required courses shall include: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II or a course of equal rigor; and
 - The minimum course for credit shall be Algebra I.
 - Science – Three (3) credits that shall incorporate lab-based scientific investigation experiences and include the content strands of biological science, physical science, earth and space science, and unifying concepts.
 - Health – One-half (1/2) credit to include the content strands of individual well-being, consumer decision, personal wellness, mental wellness, and community services.
 - Physical Education – One-half (1/2) credit to include the content strands of personal wellness, psychomotor, and lifetime activity.
 - History and appreciation of Visual and Performing Arts – One (1) credit to include the content strands of arts, dance, music, theatre, and visual arts (or another arts course that incorporates this content) or a standards-based specialized course based on the student's Individual Graduation Plan.
 - Academic and career interest standards-based learning experiences – Seven (7) credits including four (4) standards-based learning experiences in an academic or career interest based on the student's Individual Graduation Plan.
 - World Language – Demonstrated proficiency in understanding and communicating in a second language.
 - Technology – Demonstrated performance-based proficiency in technology.
- The second item, possible changes to the **Commonwealth Diploma**, included offering this type of diploma with either an academic focus or a career and technical focus. For the academic focus option, the proposed requirements were:
 - (1) Successful completion of at least twenty-two (22) approved units of credit, including all of the minimum unit requirements for high school graduation set

forth in 704 KAR 3:305 and any additional units specified by the applicable local board of education.

- (2) (a) Successful completion (i.e., receiving a grade or the equivalent of "B" or better) of at least four (4) courses in at least two content areas that contain essential content as described in the Advanced Placement (AP) Program Course Description booklets of the College Entrance Examination Board, which may be obtained from the College Entrance Examination Board; or,

(b) Successful completion (i.e., receiving a grade or the equivalent of "B" or better) of at least four (4) courses that contain essential content as described in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program course description booklets, which may be obtained from the International Baccalaureate North America, Inc.;
- (3) Completion of one (1) AP Examination in at least three (3) of the AP or IB areas specified in subsection (3) of this section, with one passing score consisting of a three (3) or higher on the AP Examination or a score of four (4) or higher on the IB Examination received prior to the senior year so that the score will be received in a timely manner to process the Commonwealth Diploma; and
- (4) A composite score of 1200 or higher on the verbal and mathematics sections of the SAT or a composite score of 24 on the ACT.

The proposed requirements for the career and technical focus included:

- (1) Successful completion of at least twenty-two (22) approved units of credit, including all the minimum unit requirements for high school graduation set forth in 704 KAR 3:305 and any additional units specified by the applicable local board of education;
- (2) Successful completion (i.e., receiving a grade or the equivalent of "B" or better) in at least two (2) AP or IB courses;
- (3) Completion of one (1) AP Examination in at least two (2) of the AP or IB areas as described in the Advanced Placement (AP) Program Course Descriptions published by the College Entrance Examination Board or as described in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program course descriptions published by the International Baccalaureate North America, Inc., with one passing score consisting of a three (3) or higher on the AP Examination or a score of four (4) or higher on the IB Examination received prior to senior year so that the score will be received in a timely manner to process the Commonwealth Diploma;
- (4) A composite score of 1200 or higher on the mathematics and verbal sections of the SAT or a composite score of 24 on the ACT;

(5) Successful completion (i.e., receiving a grade or the equivalent of “B” or better) in at least one (1) dual credit technical course; and

(6) Receive a Skill Standards Certificate.

- The final component of the refocusing secondary education discussion dealt with **alignment of funding policy to facilitate secondary reform** and would require revisions to 702 KAR 7:125, Pupil attendance. The proposed changes to 702 KAR 7:125 would provide a funding option that would allow schools to earn average daily attendance (ADA) for students involved in other types of credit-bearing educational opportunities such as standards-based performance-based credit for a class or block. Additionally, funding would be provided for a program authorized by the commissioner of education so that graduation requirements are based on student proficiency of standards and performance rather than time and Carnegie units.

➤ **More Intensive/Focused Interventions Discussed For Low-Performing/Gap Schools** -- At its October meeting, the Kentucky Board of Education continued discussions on the urgency of intervening in a more intensive/focused way in those schools that have shown the least progress in raising academic performance and closing achievement gaps. Specifically, Department staff asked the Board to consider the following:

- Current regulations allow for certain additional interventions to be applied to level 3 schools that remain in that status for two (2) consecutive biennia. There have been a certain number of schools that have moved in, out, and back into level 3 status from one biennia to another. In order to provide more sustained intervention to these schools, it is proposed that a school that falls into level 3 status for 2 out of 3 biennia, rather than just 2 consecutive biennia, will receive additional interventions.
- Currently, there are five (5) tiers under NCLB into which schools fall if they do not meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for a certain number of years ranging from 2 to 6. Additionally, schools that perform below a certain score on CATS are identified as level 1, level 2, or level 3. It is recommended that the law be amended to allow for schools in level 3 for two out of three biennia and tier 5 schools receive the same consequences and interventions. With this change, governance of tier 5 schools will be determined by scholastic audit teams the same as two biennia level 3 schools.

Other recommendations for the most effective strategies to assist low-performing schools and schools that have significant achievement gaps were considered. These were prioritized as those having the greatest impact on student achievement and were arranged around the topics of school culture, leadership, articulated curriculum, effective instruction and data-driven decision making/measuring progress.

Board members provided input on the proposals to Department staff on the proposals and asked that a revised draft be brought back to the December 7-8 meeting.

Upcoming Agenda Items for the December 7-8, 2005 Kentucky Board of Education Meeting Include:

- Update on assessment RFP process
- Writing portfolio administration guidelines
- Follow-up discussion on interventions in gap/low-performing schools
- Revised district audit process
- Quality assurance process/measures for A5 and A6 schools